(76)

1916

WISSETT LODGE,
HALESWORTH,
SUFFOLK.

Sep. 14

My Billy.

Thank you for yours letter warning me about the house. But as you now know its not that house that was any question. In fact now I'm afraid there's no question of any. I have heard from Sewell saying that he's failed to come to terms with the agent who wanted £3 an acre for land which was only worth 30/- Its most disappointing as he says he could have let the house to me at

a low rent & given work
to D. & B. It's all the
worse as Maynard went
to see the Pelham & they
were evidently very much
against this place, though
they admitted there was
enough work at any
rate for one man. On the
ground D. Duncan's running
it himself. We haven't
heard officially yet but I
expect we shall be allowed
to stay. So I have been
wondering whether after all
we couldn't arrange some-

thing either with Gurney or at Charleston. but it is so difficult to find out without being on the spot. If we hear that the Pelhams won't allow this I think I may try to come to Lewes & I prospect. You won't be at Asheham I fear. How long do you stay in Cornwall? If you were at Asheham I would have asked you to have me for a day or two. But otherwise I can stay in Lewes. If it necessary to stay anywhere I expect to come to London in about 10 days or may go to Lewes from there.

Meanwhile, can you tell me anything about either Gunn's farm (the one he wanted to take) or Mr. Slacey's? Could any arrangement be made with Gunn by which I could pay more rent for the house & less for the land? (I don't know how much land there is, nor how big the house is, nor how long a lease it would be - information on any of these points would be welcome) I should be willing to pay a little extra for the sake of the great convenience it might be.

(76 ii)

on 12 - 16th Sept. 1916

WISSETT LODGE,
HALESWORTH,
SUFFOLK.

Then about Charleston (Adrian) didn't take it, did he? / Do you know anything about Mr Stacey - wd he stand to C.O's? What kind of farm is it. Does it or any farm go with the house? / daresay you can't get me any information as yours just going away so don't bother - / may write on the chance of your knowing anything about it all. If the

cant stay here one jam
near Leeds sounds so
much the nicest alternative
that its worth making
an effort to get something.

Maynard has definitely
taken Gordon Sq. or
most of it. He will
move in at the end of
this month. & I shall
come up a few days
before to get the house
straight for him.

I'm sorry to write such a dull business letter. No one has been staying here lately & we've no news. Duncan & Bunny have been helping Mr Lampshire, a farmer, near Lyet in his harvest. Which means that they've been out working 12 hours a day for the last week. I take them lunch in the middle of the day & have to feed their animals for them - so you see we've been leading dull laborious lives. Really farmers do have a hard life I think. I shouldn't like to go in

doing it year after year.

I wish you'd send me Helen's reply to your mortuary letter. Was it good? I suppose I've now broken for ever with the last relics of that family which I dare regret as long as you get occasional plums from them.

Do write & tell me all about Cornwall. They say I'm still romantic about it — so are you — & so I expect will be Margaret Davies.

Yours VB

T. PARSONS 3.2.73

(75) 1st pages missing (Sept) (Autumn 16)

WISSETT LODGE,
HALESWORTH,
SUFFOLK.

take the house & run it for them. & If course it would be much easier for me to come up to London often. Also I should be near you when you were there. which perhaps you might think an advantage. Any how it seems a chance not to lose if one can take it. - So I have at once written direct to Simon to ask him

whether its true & he'll give me details. I have told him they are C. O's. & all I can about them so if he asks you will you give him any further details you can. I want him to realize they would work seriously under him & not be fine gentlemen. Also they would not expect the wages of skilled or experienced labourers. I havent said

anything about wages to him
If you can with you
tell me anything about
the horse - the number
of rooms etc. but I
expect Gunn will tell me.
so I'll say no more. If you
way to ask him. Its
only in case he should
talk to you about it.
Should you approve of the
plan? I hope so & I
hope it may be possible
for I do think it would
be much more cheerful
there than here in the
winter - the chief drawback
I suspect is that probably

the house is very small which might make it difficult except in the winter. I have practically arranged with Maynard to take a Studio & Sleeping rooms for the children & one for myself, which would be a very cheap arrangement for us, almost as good as letting the house so I should be very glad but its not quite certain yet. He has almost succeeded in letting this house to Brett (a friend of Carrington's) so at the moment I think its not worth while tackling the S. W's. though if he's letting into you perhaps you could find out if it's true that he wants a house. Please write soon. V.B.

77 Charleston ?? 27 November 1916

Monday

My Billy.

I have written to Walter to ask him whether Aunt Annie will now send us the MS or what I'm to do about it, telling him it does belong to us, & then I suppose we had better settle how & when to sell it. Perhaps this is a bad moment? However I should be in favour of selling now if we can as I expect I have had to get a lot of things for this house & am also very hard up. Adrian writes that his Tribunal went off better than Garsington. Philip is trying again to get them to allow it. Or he may possibly stay on at Cheltenham. But he doesn't want to. & so he may want to try & come here. I don't think Mr Hicks would have work for him but we might possibly

find him other work in the neighbourhood. However its all vague still. There seems also to be another farmer at Farsington who might take him. He says that Sylvias husband has been suddenly ordered off to a labour camp which is rather upsetting. But I rather think he has not been definitely allowed to do the work he was doing by his tribunal. It will be awful if everyone is upset again.

The worst of you coming here in the middle of the week is that I generally go up to London in the middle of the week. But I shant when I have the children settled here. which will be in less than 3 weeks now. Mabel is going to have a holiday at Christmas so I shall have charge of them here.

Saxon probably comes to us about Thursday or Saturday. I fear he will be rather dismal. I wish Barbara werent coming too for the week end. I go to London I expect on Thursday for one night.

I hope you'll get your pres. Why do those income tax people always give one less than one has a right to. Love V

I have just had a cheque Chamberlain from Smith Elder. File for £28-15-0 so I send you yours change £9-11-8

18 Jan 1917

Thursday

My Billy.

I don't mind what you do with the letters. Have you got them all or have I got any? I believe I've got rather an amusing one to myself somewhere about a Dog. I was afraid for old Henry - which I might be able to find if you think it would be wanted. I heard from Waller that Aunt Annie had sent him the MS & he is keeping it till I go & get it from him which I will do when I get to London. What am I to do then? I suppose write to Pierpont.

I'm sending you the recipes which you left behind.

My family is now settling down. I expect the little Blancos today. Nelly wrote to tell me she couldn't send her children here as she's going to economise as usual. Live half the year in the country with the two younger children who run wild while Michael goes to Isobel Fry's new school where they teach them everything by practical means. So I'm rather glad I nabbed the Blancos. But

I think I shall try to get another boy of about Julian's age. I have solved the governess question by making Mabel into governess. She seems quite competent to teach them at present. & I shall teach them French myself. & perhaps Euclid. Ha! She can manage all the necessary reading & writing etc. which is all they were doing at school.

I am feeling the usual sense of relief when one's friends leave me - having had Clive, Mary & Roger here for the week end. Roger stayed till yesterday & now we are alone again. I have had writing about James & Noel. Did you see them Achilles? I daresay by now the whole thing has lapsed. If not I shall see them & conclude.

We have no other visitors in prospect so I hope you will use your intelligence & see that my grumblings to you about visitors mean that you ought to come here soon. I don't see why you should afford 12/6 to visit me. Now I have Mabel here I shall have a great deal of spare time to give you. In fact you might sit to me & talk to me which might be keep you quite contented & I would take you in the downs in the afternoons. It's very cold but very cold but very beautiful here & I think you really ought to be either here or at Asheham more often. I don't believe I shall ever live in London again unless forced to do so. Duncan sends you his love

Yrs
VB

(77a)

(1917)

Charleston
File

Feb 1

My Billy.

I meant to write & wish you many happy returns but the day went past without my doing it in the lucky lucky here. I really am the old woman in the shoe now & mean to get rid of me & my 14 years old & get a proper cook. Then I shall have peace. You neednt be afraid I'm getting through. I'm perfectly well & dont intend to spend any more time in doing household labours than I can help. Even now its only in the evenings that I have to & when I get a cook I shant do that I dont teach the children either except for ½ an hour daily which only means telling them a few

French words or singing nursery rhymes with them. By the way I suppose you haven't got any of our old Tonic-sol-fa books? It is not likely. I find I remember a good deal but I can't remember what words we used for the time did we say ta & nothing but ta or how did we distinguish between crotchets & quavers? I wonder how much you remember?)

It has been perishing cold here. All our pipes frozen & the pond bearing to the children's delight, but now it's much warmer & thawing. It rained worse at Rochdale though, where Mr Oldfield had collapsed with influenza & Jessie had to spend hours in the Coal room with all the lamps in the house burning round him & his arms in the icy water trying to break the ice - & no drop of water

the fat except direct from the trunk
They succeeded in drawing it eventually
& I think Mrs Attfield was recovering
They all seemed to be enjoying
themselves enormously however
Satan having provided the young
ladies with masses of sweets -
He ties up their doors with bits
of wire at night to prevent them
from getting up early in the
morning & then brings them early
tea in bed.

Feb. 3 I began this letter 2 days ago
but didn't get it finished. Last night
we went to a dinner party at
Askham - It was very queer going
there & finding Satan, Barbara &
Carington in possession. One hardly
realized though that it was Askham
once inside the house, for they use
the big room as sitting room - It
makes a very nice one with chairs
& tables brought in & is more
spacious than the others - They
all seemed very comfortable. I thought

Saxon perhaps rather depressed.
Duncan & I bicycled back by moonlight. It's a very easy ride I see - I could nip over to you in the summer in no time.
We stole a few apples - I hope you don't mind - & I wondered whether you would like to sell me some?
They are all getting soft & many have gone bad. So it seems rather a waste if you're not going to use them yourselves for some time - I should be very glad to buy some at whatever is the market price as it's often impossible to get any in Lewes.
But you may want to keep them. I also told Barbara if she could to get Mrs Attfield to send me the mattress you said I could have - I don't know if it can be sent through - & it's not very easy for me to send for it.
I have heard that Mabel's sister, Trixie, who is cook to

(77a ii)

Mary Hutchinson, is leaving her. I hope to get her here. Which would solve all my difficulties.

I am now fascinated by trying to house keep economically. (I really will send the receipes) I find I can do it for about 12/- a head all round - including washing & oil, & everything except coal - which I think isn't fair compared to our ancestors who didn't have war prices. Its really very interesting if one goes into it oneself & sees how it can be done. Next year I hope we shall have our own vegetables which will make a difference

Now do write soon & tell me all the scrip you can raise together. As soon as I get a cook established here I shall come to London for a flutter & I daresay I shall see you

if you want come here - You
can't think how wonderful the
downs are though. in the snow
Last night Asheham looked
more haunted than ever. Who
does haunt it?

Tuesday. Its really awful - I
can't get this letter done. I
must finish it now - Your
book came for Julian &
he has been sitting absorbed
in it. Like me, he's a book-
worm in his youth & pre-
fers a book to any other
present. It was very
thoughtful of you to remember
him. I made him a cake
with 9 candles round it
Has getting simply huge here
& beautiful eats & plates &
provide for breakfast without
turning a hair.

Yours VB

T. PARSONS 3.2.23